

\$2300 from 6 Acres of strawberries

M. L. Mebene is a grower in the Gulf Coast Country of Texas and Louisiana. He has a 6-acre patch of strawberries. For his strawberry crop, this past season, he was paid \$2,300 cash, f. o. b. cars, at his home station, Chocolate Bayou, Texas.

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for the lips of an archconspirator to wear. Thereafter he takes up the black bag, empty now, shoulders the spade, and sets off, keeping once more in the shadows, leaving Conspirator Number Two to guard their guilty secret.

NOW, as Conspirator Number One goes his shady way, he keeps his look directed toward the rising moon, and thus he almost runs into one who also stands amid the shadows and whose gaze is likewise fixed upon the moon.

"Ah, Mr. Bellew!" exclaims a drawing voice, and Squire Cassilis turns to regard him with his usual supercilious smile. Indeed, Squire Cassilis seems to be even more self-satisfied and smiling than ordinary tonight; or at least Bellew imagines so.

"You are still agriculturally inclined, I see," said Cassilis, nodding toward the spade; "though it's rather a queer time to choose for digging, isn't it?"

"Not at all, Sir, not at all," returned Bellew solemnly. "The moon is very nearly at the full, you will perceive."

"Well, Sir, and what of that?"

"When the moon is at the full, or nearly so, I generally dig, Sir; that is to say, circumstances permitting."

"Really," said Cassilis, beginning to caress his mustache, "it seems to me that you have very—ah—peculiar tastes, Mr. Bellew."

"That is because you have probably never experienced the fierce joys of moonlight digging, Sir."

"No, Mr. Bellew; digging, as a recreation, has never appealed to me at any time."

"Then, Sir," said Bellew, shaking his head, "permit me to tell you that you have missed a great deal. Had I the time, I should be delighted to explain to you exactly how much; as it is, allow me to wish you a very good evening."

Cassilis smiled, and his teeth seemed to gleam whiter and sharper than ever in the moonlight. "Wouldn't it be rather more apropos if you said goodbye, Mr. Bellew?" he inquired. "You are leaving Dapplemere shortly, I understand, aren't you?"

"Why, Sir," returned Bellew, grave and imperturbable as ever, "it all depends."

"Depends! Upon what, may I ask?"

"The moon, Sir."

"The moon?"

"Precisely!"

"And pray what can the moon have to do with your departure?"

"A great deal more than you'd think, Sir. Had I the time, I should be delighted to explain to you exactly how much; as it is, permit me to wish you a very good evening."

Saying which, Bellew nodded affably, and, shouldering his spade, went upon his way. And still he walked in the shadows, and still he gazed upon the moon; but now his thick brows were gathered in a frown, and he was wondering just why Cassilis should chance to be here tonight, and what his confident air and the general assurance of his manner might portend. Above all, he was wondering how Cassilis came to be aware of his own impending departure. And so, at last, he came to the rickyard, full of increasing doubt and misgivings.

To be continued next Sunday

NATIONAL TOPLINERS

BY JAMES HAY, JR.

WILLIAM HUGHES, the Friend of Those Who Work! That is the appropriate, suitable, applicable, and accurate inscription for the visiting cards of the Member of Congress from Paterson, New Jersey, because he takes his stand in the Capitol and gathers under his protecting wing ("wing" is right; for he is a baseball player) all those who labor and are heavy laden. Organized labor, unorganized labor, disorganized labor—it's all the same to him. He is the friend of the working man, and doesn't care three raps in a snowstorm who knows it. In fact, if anybody has overlooked it, the fault does not lie with Hughes.

Before he went into politics, he went off like a cuckoo clock every quarter of an hour with this: "I am for the working man!"

After he got into politics, he performed like six cuckoo clocks with the same motto, and, if you waked him up tomorrow morning and asked him how he stood, he would let out this yip:

"For labor, the laboring man—God bless him!"

At present he is a member of the House Committee on Ways and Means, that organization which has been trying to do all in its power to lower the cost of living. At one time it was said that he would recline in the chairmanship of the Committee on Labor; but he was regarded as so valuable that he had to take the Ways and Means job.

In his youth he worked at a loom in a factory in Paterson. Is he for laboring men? Anybody who guesses yes guesses right. He worked at that loom, and he saw other people—men, women, and children—working all around him. But he never wanted to stay at a loom, anyway, and he hustled about and studied law on the side, finally accumulating sufficient knowledge of the statutes to become a practicing attorney.

It didn't take him long to get a start. All the factory people went after him. They crowded his office, and, after he had "risen" enough to have an anteroom, they cluttered that up in their journeys to his headquarters for legal advice and assistance. He was for labor, and labor was for him. The result was natural. Said Billy one fine morning, when sap and optimism were abroad in the land:

"Labor—votes—political honors—me!"

After which abbreviated sentence, he smote himself on the chest and beat it has-



William Hughes.

tily through the working quarters of Paterson, asking votes. And he got 'em—got 'em in droves, herds, coveys, and shoals, got 'em unreservedly, got 'em with sinkers on 'em, got enough to send him to Congress from a Republican district, although he was a Democrat.

Last winter, when the time came for the organization of the new Democratic House, Hughes was one of the small group that portioned out committee chairmanships, passed on the policies of the party, and welded the old members and the new ones into a harmonious and working whole. He first served in the Fifty-eighth Congress, and, although an unkind Fate kept him out of the Fifty-ninth, he got back into the Sixtieth, and has been

working under the big white dome ever since—which is the reason for the influence he now exercises among his fellow legislators. He works and stays on his job.

When the conferences were being held to decide on the organization of the House, he would hop up now and then and let out a long scream about how well the laboring man must be looked after. If a proposal was made to elevate to high honor a man inimical to labor,—organized, unorganized, or disorganized,—he was there with his hammer, protesting, howling, voting "No!" and jumping up and down like a wild man.

It has been the same way in the Committee on Ways and Means. Every time he sees a chance to fill the dinner pail at a reduced cost, a beatific smile overspreads his face and softens the lines of his protuberant jaw. Every time a schedule is not cut to the marrow, he drapes himself in figurative sackcloth and eats a lot of metaphorical ashes, thereafter retiring into abyssmal gloom.

Moreover, he has introduced in the House more bills to help laboring people individually and collectively than any other man in Congress.

Billy Hughes was born in Ireland in 1872. During the Spanish-American War he served in the Second New Jersey Volunteers. But his strength in his district is not founded on his war reputation. It is built on that hobby of his, "Hurrah for the laborer!" All his people know that he wants to shorten the hours of labor for women and children, and that he distrusts corporations and plutocrats because he loves labor.

Briefly speaking, he is the Democratic Laborite of Congress, and some day he may walk down the aisle of the House clad in

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